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ABSTRACT

This paper places inquiry into teacher education in an historical and critical context, raising questions and themes which are of interest to teacher educators as well as historians. The social contexts and human factors that influenced the development of teacher education in the United States in the 19th and 20th centuries are examined. An inquiry is made into the institutionalization of teachers' preparation over the past 100 years with a particular focus on developing conceptions of professionalization. The paper identifies three paradigms of professionalization in the history of teacher preparation: teaching as a "calling," teaching as a "science," and teaching as a "craft." The process by which the second paradigm has come to dominate thinking about teaching and teacher preparation and the effects of this domination on the practice of teaching and preparing teachers are explored. It is noted that teaching as a "craft" is overshadowed by the dominant, technological paradigm, and it is suggested that a more thorough examination of this paradigm by teacher educators is in order. (Author/JD)

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Teacher Education: Taking An Historical Perspective

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ABSTRACT

This paper places inquiry into teacher education in an historical and critical context, raising questions and themes which are of interest to teacher educators as well as historians. The social contexts and human factors which influenced the development of teacher education in the United States in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are examined. More specifically, this paper is an inquiry into the institutionalization of teachers preparation over the past one hundred years with a particular focus on developing conceptions of professionalization. The paper identifies three paradigms of professionalization in the history of teacher preparation: teaching as a "calling," teaching as a "science," and teaching as a "craft." The process by which the second paradigm has come to dominate thinking about teaching and teacher preparation and the effects of this domination on the practice of teaching and preparing teachers are explored.

TEACHER EDUCATION: TAKING AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

"We cannot have great schools if we fail to
build to truly great teaching profession."

Terrel Bell, 1983

In the past year a plethora of reports critical of our nation's schools have appeared which have focused public and professional attention on current practices in teacher education. Such a focus is, of course, not new; from Horace Mann, who argued that the effectiveness of the common schools depended upon a supply of well-trained teachers (Borrowman, 1956) to Terrel Bell quoted above, educators and public alike have scrutinized teachers and the processes of preparing teachers. The questions and criticisms being raised now, afford us the opportunity of critically reviewing, once again, the education of American teachers.

A critical examination of the education and socialization processes of particular occupations must include looking at the historical traditions within which those occupations function. Every occupation, every profession, has a history and these historical traditions, as well as the traditions of the larger culture, influence the life and work of those operating within them (Kliebard and Franklin, 1983). Teacher education programs embody a set of collective traditions; to view these programs only with the eye of the present, is to obscure both the roots and the meanings of current forms.

Teacher educators, as well as historians, can benefit from a critical reading of their own collective history. Historical inquiry provides a process through which to uncover the ideas and modes of thought which supported the development of certain social practices and institutions at particular times. Seeing only things "as they are" makes it too easy to take foregranted current forms and practices, too easy not to question the underlying assumptions and power relationships, too easy not to consider alternatives. The development of current forms was neither inevitable nor without alternatives

and conflict. An historical perspective, then, can provide some of the tools through which to critically examine current practice.

This paper begins to explore the social contexts and human factors which influenced the development of teacher education in America in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. More specifically, this paper is an inquiry into the institutionalization of teacher preparation over the past one hundred years with a focus particularly upon conceptions of professionalization which guided that process.

By institutionalization, I mean the development of systems of collective behavior and thought (Mattingly, 1983). Such systems are often taken for-granted; we function within them but fail to question their origins and meanings. Yet inquiry into the development of institutions can bring important insight. "The institution acts as a kind of historical prism, identifying individuals, rhetorics, and groupings of a significant collective endeavor over time" (Mattingly, p. 50, 1983). The particular focus upon conceptions of professionalization is intended to make problematic some of the rhetoric which has recurred throughout the history of teacher education in this country. It is hoped that this will illuminate various conceptions of the role of teacher which lay beneath the rhetoric of respect and expectation.

The Professionalization of Teaching

It is useful to begin with brief discussion of the term professionalization. The move toward the professionalization of occupations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, may be seen as an attempt on the part of service occupations to develop the power to win public confidence in order to attain a monopoly on the particular service being offered (Larson, 1977). Members of a profession sought to lay claim to autonomy in action and decision-making in exchange for assurances to the public of expert service and ethical behavior. Control of members of the profession, their training and practice, would come from the

profession itself rather than from the community. Preservation of a monopoly of service would be assured through professional control over the production of and access to the knowledge base of the profession. Professionalization, in short, was a way to gain power in a society in which traditional forms of authority were breaking down (Popkewitz, 1982).

More specific meanings of the professionalization of teaching took shape, in the work and rhetoric of leading educators over the last two centuries, and in the institutional forms which teacher preparation has taken. That is to say, the institutionalization of teacher preparation was closely tied to the developing conceptions of professionalization. The ideas of the men and women who helped to shape the institutional forms were influenced by and in turn influenced developing conceptions of the role of the teacher and the profession of teaching. As will be described, the institutions created for the purpose of preparing teachers served both to socialize teachers to a particular professional ethos and to legitimate to the public the "profession" of teaching.

I suggest here that three paradigms of professionalization may be identified within the history of teacher preparation in the United States. The first, an early nineteenth century paradigm, pre-dates the modern conception of professionalization described above. This paradigm grew from a traditional religious base of authority; this is the paradigm of teaching as a calling. A second paradigm emerged in the nineteenth century, along with more modern conceptions of professionalization, and came to dominate in the twentieth; this is the model of the teacher as "expert" and teaching as the application of "scientifically" determined techniques. A third paradigm stresses the importance of personal creativity and social knowledge. This is the model of teaching as a craft in which the practitioner skillfully blends theory and practice.

Teaching as Calling

In the early nineteenth century teaching was not considered a full-time or

long term profession; rather it was a job one might perform before entering another profession or while not involved in another occupation, such as farming. Schooling and teaching were still clearly rooted in their religious origins. Ministers maintained an interest in teaching, even while the actual job was taken over by laymen. It was often a minister, for example, who assumed the community's task of overseeing the functions of the school. Indeed, at that time in our history, religion still held great authority in the community, and the church and the ruling class were closely identified (Curti, 1978). It is no surprise, then, that the professional definition of schooling which emerged in this period had a religious base.

P.H. Mattingly (1975) describes the efforts of influential schoolmen to develop teaching into a full-time occupation and to establish institutions aimed at the preparation and improvement of teachers. Through his work, one gains insight into the nineteenth century move toward the professionalization of teaching. Much of the following discussion in this section is based on Mattingly's work.

A variety of factors influenced several influential citizens to devote time and energy to the development of the occupation of teaching. Nationalism and a commitment to the "democratic experiment" appeared to demand an educated populous. In the atmosphere of early nineteenth century reform movements, the efforts of some went into the reform of schools and the development of teaching (Curti, 1978). Hence a loosely defined group of influential citizens, calling themselves the Friends of Education, took an interest in schooling. These men focused public discussion on the problems of common schools and worked to rally support for schooling.

These men of privilege, men such as Samuel May and William Alcott, hoped to educate the public on matters of education and to provide a forum for educating teachers as well. The lyceum movement of the period served as a model

to provide an institutional form for the education of the community and of teachers. This took the form of voluntary association for mutual benefit which provided a forum for community and teacher alike to observe and discuss individual teachers and teaching. The lyceum also allowed teachers to make connections, both to establish a sense of professional kinship and to enhance advancement possibilities.

Both Alcott and May regarded teaching as a "calling" in which the teacher could adequately instruct himself. Character, a sense of discipline and dedication, not specific skills or practices, was seen as the key to good teaching. In fact, the lyceum was intended primarily to educate the public in order that they might intelligently perform their task of overseeing education. The lyceum did not provide an institutional form specifically, but rather only additionally, to educate teachers.

While other "Friends of Education" agreed that teaching was a calling, some were dissatisfied with the then unsystematic preparation for teaching. Preparation, however, in the context of a calling, meant the development of commitment and devotion, of a willingness to undergo personal sacrifice; it meant individual conditioning and the development of self-understanding.

In 1832, Samuel Read Hall, with the support of other influential citizens founded the School Agents Society. This organization in effect established "circuit schools," institutions intended bring the benefits of established seminaries to the people. Agents travelled a circuit, disseminating notions of educational standards and developing methods of "preparing" teachers. Again, preparation was thought of more in terms of calling rather than learning. But the emphasis was on the "awakening" of an individual's potential rather than the development of discipline and dedication.

From these circuit schools emerged teachers' institutes and it was these institutes, rather than normal schools, which played a major role in the

professional development of teaching in the years before the Civil War. Institutes were intended for practicing teachers, few of whom had had formal preparation, during intervals between actual teaching. By the late 1840's they touched more teachers than any other educational institution. They were originally vehicles for awakening and inculcating character, rather than for training specific skills. By the 1850's, however, a new generation of schoolmen came of age. To a large extent these were men with experience in teaching and they brought with them a shift in viewpoint from "awakening" to training in pedagogy. By the 1850's the teachers' institutes, through the efforts of experienced teachers, attempted to define specific measures for teacher training. Teacher preparation was coming to be seen as the development of effective methods of instruction rather than the awakening of dedication or the development of discipline. By the 1860's teacher institutes were viewed as necessary for those who did not get to normal school, rather than as primary institutions for educating teachers.

Thus, in the early nineteenth century efforts to make teaching a full-time occupation were begun and accompanying these efforts was the rhetoric of professionalization. Professionalization, in those early years was perceived in religious terms. Perhaps Henry Barnard captured this view of teaching when he spoke of the need to create a "priesthood of teachers" (Curti, 1978). Education was still viewed, in part at least, as a religious endeavor and early efforts to professionalize must be seen in this light. In addition, since efforts to gain recognition as a profession depend upon a public acknowledgement of that occupation's base of authority, it seems reasonable that early efforts at professionalization were rooted in an accepted source of authority at that time - religion.

Education as Technical Know-how

As previously described, teacher's institutes focused more and more on teaching skills of teaching; nonetheless, in the mid-nineteenth century

traditional assumptions of teaching as a moral calling remained the basis of the thinking of influential schoolmen. It was not assumed that teaching the mechanics of the occupation would lead to mechanical teaching; rather, educators believed that good techniques would enable a teacher to be both moral and professional. Normal school leaders also emphasized the importance of dedication, of duty and of calling. They often maintained a climate of retreat within which a sense of dedication could be built (Borrowman, 1965). The normal schools, however, also emphasized learning a body of technical knowledge and by the late nineteenth century, it was the normal school with this technical emphasis, which provided the major socialization into the profession and the dominant ideology of professionalization.

Normal schools grew up in close connection with the common school. Prospective teachers attended the normal school directly from the common school and then returned to the common school as teachers. Most often, normal school students were people who otherwise had little opportunity for continued education or for work in other professions. Although there were, at one time, many normal schools with a variety of guiding philosophies, they generally came to be seen as "a symbol of illiberalism and excessive technicalism" (Borrowman, 1965, p. 20). That is, despite a variety of ideas about the nature of teacher preparation and professionalization, teaching pedagogy was increasingly associated with teaching technique. Technical know-how became an end in itself. The Oswego movement, which probably best exemplified this approach to teacher preparation, was a powerful influence on teacher preparation in general (Borrowman, 1965) and on developing conceptions of professionalization. Growing out to this Oswego influence was an emphasis on technique and the importance of direct practice.

Beginning around the turn of the century, normal schools, in response to demands within the profession for more qualified teachers, began converting

to teachers' colleges. There was resistance to transferring teacher training to existing colleges and universities, in part because of the hope that professionalization would be enhanced by an emphasis on specialization (Haberman and Stinnett, 1973). Teacher's colleges generally continued the emphasis on technique and by 1930 Abraham Flexner wrote that although the field of education had begun with great promise, it had "degenerated in the hands of mediocre people with a passion for technical know-how" (Borrowman, 1965, P. 14).

By the early twentieth century, educators' concerns were increasingly focused on the systematization of rules based upon a growing body of scientific research. Indeed, a "science of education", based in the universities, began to develop and to become the basis for educators' claims to professionalization and for the normal school curriculum (Borrowman, 1956). Advances in statistics and behavioristic psychology, particularly the work of Edward Thorndike, provided the foundation for an empirical approach to education. Quantitative studies gained popularity and, while these provided reliable information, they also tended to create a sense of over-confidence in technique. All teaching problems, it seemed, had technical solutions and these lay in the development of particular traits and skills as discovered and systematized by educational researchers.

By the mid-twentieth century, most teachers' colleges had become all purpose colleges and teacher education came to be lodged in departments and schools of education within broad purpose institutions of higher education (Haberman and Stinnett, 1973). The functions of educational research, the training of educational leaders, and teacher training came more and more to be housed under one roof. Universities, meanwhile, had moved away from the early liberal arts ideal toward a greater stress on functional course work and on the research ideal (Bledstein, 1976). Hence they were able to absorb the relatively new mandate for professional training. But this did not necessarily move teacher education programs away from the normal school emphasis on technical education.

Undergirded now with the authority of scientific research, teacher preparation programs continued to emphasize the development of skills and technique.

These developments within teacher preparation reflected shifting views on professionalization more generally. Modern conceptions of professionalization may be related to the breakdown of traditional forms of authority such as religion and birthright (Bledstein, 1978; Popkewitz, 1982) and to advances in industrial and corporate capitalism and to cognitive rationality in science (Larson, 1977). The movement toward professionalism was characterized by the development of new criteria for establishing authority and prestige. Just as industrialists and merchants sought to create and control markets for their products, so too did groups offering a service, such as surgeons and attorneys, seek to create and control a commodity and a market. Unlike the product of the industrialist and the merchant, however, what the aspiring professions offered for sale were the services they could render. Thus it became necessary to demonstrate the superiority of one type of service over another. The acquisition of scientific knowledge, and the credentials to demonstrate that one possessed that knowledge, became the new criteria for authority (Bledstein, 1976). Scientific knowledge, with its claims to universal and predictable rules, became the basis for claims to authority, control and power. The knowledge base of a profession had come to be that which is based on the rules, procedures and assumptions of the "scientific method."

The rhetoric of teacher education and professionalization gradually changed from the rhetoric of a calling to that of science and technology. Universities came to be seen as centers for the production of a technology of teaching. Given this technology, it was argued that pre-service teachers could be taught the skills and knowledge of effective teaching. Through a combination of research and training, educators could strive to train teachers who would then be the experts who could practice these skills and implement this knowledge within specific contexts.

Teaching As Craft: The Interaction of Theory and Practice

In a 1904 essay, John Dewey criticized then current practices in teacher education for their over emphasis on the immediate practical aim of equipping the actual teacher (Dewey, 1974). Far better, argued Dewey, "to supply the intellectual method and material of good workmanship, instead of making on the spot, as it were, an efficient workman" (Dewey, 1974). The former emphasis, he argued, placed too much attention on that which succeeds or fails from moment to moment. The emphasis on proficiency would distract from thoughtful inquiry and analysis. It would promote intellectual dependency rather than critical, analytic ability. "It is possible," wrote Dewey, "for a student to acquire outward form of method without capacity to put it to genuinely educative use" (Dewey, 1974, p. 318).

Dewey's ideas about teacher education fit into a third paradigm which I have called Teaching as Craft. In this paradigm, technical skill is viewed as necessary, but not sufficient, to good teaching (see, for example, Tom, 1980). A teacher must develop technical skills but should avoid becoming simply the unthinking implementer of externally determined procedures. "For immediate skill may be got at the cost of power to keep on growing" (Dewey, 1974, p. 320). Educators within this paradigm de-emphasize reliance on explicit rules and place emphasis instead on teacher decision-making in the context of particular situations.

In this context, teaching as a craft may be seen as the difference between "knowing how" and knowing that" (Popkewitz, 1977). Teacher preparation would provide the knowledge base, the principles, for making decisions. It would include a "liberal" education, one which would provide students with a broad perspective of time and culture, with an ability to think critically and analytically, and with a knowledge of the basic principles upon which the science of education rests.

The idea of stressing a liberal education for teachers was certainly now new.

Until the nineteenth century, preparation for teaching meant, simply, receiving a liberal education (Borrowman, 1965). The importance of a liberal education continued to be implicit in the early views of professionalization as calling. There was little emphasis on vocational techniques; rather, the dedication and discipline which should characterize the professional teacher of that era assumed a liberal education.

With the development of the "scientific" approach to teaching and teacher preparation described above, the notion of teacher as one who is liberally educated became only a secondary focus for most educators. Systematic rules and techniques grew more elaborate and requirements for certifying teachers developed (Haberman and Stinnett, 1973). Attempts to introduce a liberalizing¹ component into the professional sequence, by way of foundations courses, often made little difference to the overall emphasis on teaching as a problem of technique (Borrowman, 1956).

Attempts to balance the technical emphasis with a broader, more liberal view continued through the twentieth century. The role of the teacher within this paradigm was a potentially powerful one. It involved teaching action based on independent thought, growing from a broad base of knowledge. For some within the paradigm, the role of the teacher was potentially even more powerful. John Dewey in 1899 (Dewey, 1974) and George Counts in 1932 (Counts, 1982) both stressed concern with the social dimensions of education. Teachers should be prepared for a role in which they have the power to fashion curriculum and procedures. In addition, they must learn to see themselves as the leaders in communicating and implementing democratic ideals. Properly educated, the teaching profession "has at its disposal, as no other group, the knowledge and wisdom of the ages" (Counts, 1982, p. 26). Teachers must seek power, Counts argued, and use it wisely and in the interests of the people. Both Dewey and Counts argued for the need to view education in the concept of broader

social issues and of the potential for change. They viewed the role of the teacher as one who brings about progressive improvements in social life.

Teaching, in this paradigm, was not a matter of correct technique or of simply implementing the knowledge derived through other's research. The teacher moves beyond "what works" immediately to developing personal knowledge and insight into the psychological and social contexts of teaching. Teachers make decisions mindfully, with an awareness of constraints, possibilities and alternatives. Furthermore, the teacher works to empower children, within a democratic context, in order that they might gain control over their social world and over cultural change.

The problem of integrating theory and practice in teacher preparation was suggested by Dewey in 1904. He advised against introducing practical components too soon, lest students be diverted from their intellectual development. When introduced, the practical becomes the data for reflection and inquiry, not for imitation (Dewey, 1977). In this way, students of education would be helped to see the interactive relationship between theory and practice, while engaged in the craft itself.

The rhetoric within this paradigm of Teaching as Craft focused less upon a concern with establishing occupational credentials in the public mind, i.e., professionalization, and more upon enhancing the actual decision-making power and abilities of practitioners. The collective power of the occupation would be strengthened by realizing the potential power of individual practitioners, rather than adhering to a set of scientifically determined prescriptions.

Implications

Given this general overview of the development of teacher education in America, several tentative conclusions, of significance to teacher educators, may be suggested. First, it is important to note that the attempt to professionalize teaching, in its dominant paradigms as a calling or as a science, was not an attempt to empower teachers within the classroom or beyond it. To

be a professional was to be non-political and non-controversial. The teacher who was "called" to the profession in the early 19th century, was to behave as a moral exemplar and avoid conflict both with the community and within the profession (Mattingly, 1975). Teachers were in the employ of, and under the control of the community and only by virtue of personal charisma might they exercise any real control or authority in their classroom or community. They were not expected to decide what should be taught or to consider alternative goals for education.

Furthermore, efforts to professionalize teaching in the early years applied primarily to men. It was men who participated in the Institutes, although women could observe (Mattingly, 1975); and it was men who were the educational leaders. Women were not accorded professional status, in the community or by the profession itself.

In the years following the Civil War, more and more women joined the ranks of teachers; by the turn of the century normal schools were "overtaken" by women (Mattingly, 1975) and the occupation was still a long way from professional status. Despite efforts to upgrade the professional status of education, the role of the teacher continued to be perceived as one that did not include educational leadership, curriculum planning or the development of methods of teaching (Tyack, 1974).

Thus each of the two dominant paradigms of professionalization, while attempting to win recognition for the occupation generally, tended to preserve and even obscure the actual powerlessness of the teacher in the community. Indeed, it would appear that the dominant paradigm of professionalization in the twentieth century has done little to enhance the role of the teacher within the profession, much less in society more generally.

In fact, herein would appear to lie the very irony of professionalization (see Adler, in press). The claim of professionalism in the twentieth century has rested primarily with claims to scientific expertise, to a set of principles

to guide planning, teaching and evaluation. The curriculum and methods established through scientific research appear to take teachers beyond individualistic craft into the realm of scientific and neutral skills, methods and knowledge. But the quest to develop and refine principles of teaching and learning may have, in practice, the contradictory effect of taking from teachers a part of their craft. The production of knowledge in universities and R & D centers has perhaps bolstered the claim to a cognitive base but, at the same time, it has contributed to a separation of conception from practice (Apple, 1983). Goals, processes and outcomes are defined by people external to the practice of teaching. With the rapid growth of prepackaged curriculum materials, teaching is often reduced to management, to the application of predetermined procedures to obtain predetermined outcomes (Gitlin, 1983). The production of knowledge is centered, not in places of practice, but developed elsewhere and passed on to practitioners. Teachers are expected to apply techniques that are regarded as neutral, objective and beyond human involvement.

Professionalization, as it has dominantly been defined in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, has done little to enhance the autonomy and power of the teacher. In the twentieth century it has justified a hierarchal status structure within the occupation. This is a structure within which the practitioner, often a woman, has little power and little recognition, while researchers and administrators, often men, increasingly come to control the knowledge and behaviors of classroom practice. Thus professionalization itself, it would seem, actually contradicts the professional claims of teachers.

Finally, professionalization, has done little to resolve the dilemma of teacher as autonomous professional vs. teacher as agent of the community. Community control is certainly less capricious than it was in the nineteenth century, when few teachers were expected to stay in one community, and when teachers' very personal lives were under careful scrutiny and control. It is

less oppressive, perhaps, than in the early twentieth century when teaching was often a patronage job and a contract from year to year was uncertain (Tyack, 1974). Nonetheless, teachers are still held accountable to community demands, both the local community and the nation. Yet both the training and expectations of teachers are apolitical. Pre-service teachers are, by and large, not encouraged to examine schooling or the role of the teacher in their political contexts. With the dominance of technocratic assumptions described earlier, teachers are not encouraged to consider the problems and possibilities of serving as change agents within a school, much less in the larger society. Given these technocratic assumptions, teachers are put in a position of relative powerlessness on matters of policy and structure.

It would seem, then, that efforts to legitimate teaching as a profession, efforts which stressed first the moral nature of teaching and then later the "scientific," objective nature of teaching, have done little to empower teachers or provide them with the tools to empower others. An alternative paradigm, teaching as craft, remains, although, often is overshadowed by the dominant, technological paradigm. Perhaps a more thorough examination of this paradigm on the part of teacher educators is in order.

1. By liberal here, I am borrowing Borrowman's (1956) definition as that which gives students a broad perspective of time, community and methodology. It is the attempt to help students see the problems of living in general, and of schooling in particular, in the broadest context.

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